

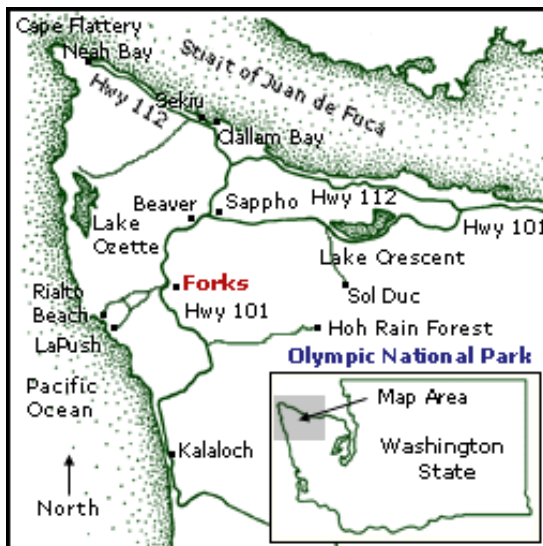
Testimony of
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RE: "National Parks in the Northwest"

Before the
Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources
of the Government Reform Committee of the
United States House of Representatives

Seattle, Washington
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Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, it is truly an honor to appear before you today. My name is Rod Fleck and I am the City Attorney and Planner for Forks, Washington. I am here today as Mayor Nedra Reed's designee, who truly is sorry that she was unable to attend this hearing, however, her husband's 50th Class Reunion and a family reunion has her in Michigan at this time. To testify before a Congressional committee is a rare opportunity for any citizen, and I am extremely grateful to Chairman Souder for the invitation to be here today.



Forks, like Washington, is truly a unique place. It takes about twelve hours to travel across this state from Forks to Clarkston, Washington. Making that trip, a person can appreciate this State's vast expanses, unique landscapes, and remarkable history. I have relegated further descriptions of this state to a very long footnote.ⁱⁱ Yet, Forks shares a lot of what makes Washington great - forests, fish, opportunity, and diversity. Forks is a small community of about 3,200 people located about 140 miles and one ferry ride from Washington's "Emerald City" where we are today. My home is in what we refer to as the "West End" - an area shared by Forks with three Tribal Nations within its 2,000+ square miles. The West End is home also to:

- Approximately 12,000 people;
- Nearly 2,000 stream miles;
- 60 miles of Pacific Coast beaches;
- 15 animals found nowhere else on this planet;
- Some remarkable species of fish such as Chinook salmon, Steelhead, and Lake Crescent's Beardsley Trout;
- Two active Chambers of Commerce - Forks and Clallam Bay/Seki.
- The first rural recipient of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's "High Tech High School" grant; and,
- One of the first memorials to the men who lost their lives logging in our forests.

In addition to being the most westerly municipality in the continental United States, we are one of the wettest communities in the state that receives on average 117 inches of rain a year - we measure it in feet where I live.

The economy of my community had been dominated with the use of the natural resources that surround us. Until the late 1980s, Forks boasted of being the “Logging Capital of the World.” The maritime industry, centered around the fishing fleet at La Push, was another strong component of our economy. Tourism was a part of the economy as well, but the community’s involvement in that industry was not as focused as it is today. That focus came as a result of policy shifts in the natural resource sector significantly curtailing the timber and fishing industries in the Westend. Expansion of the tourism sector was seen as potential means of addressing some of the impacts associated with the curtailment of logging. The efforts of many in the community have focused on marketing the fact that we are literally surrounded by the unique offerings of the Olympic National Park (Olympic)ⁱⁱⁱ.

Olympic manages the following locations within less than an hour’s drive of Forks:

- Hoh Rainforest Visitor Center;
- Sol Duc;
- Olympic Mountain Back Country;
- Mora Ranger Station;
- Pacific Coast Strip;
- Lake Ozette;
- Lake Crescent; and,
- Lake Quinault and the Quinault River Wilderness

Each of these are remarkable tourist attractions drawing hundreds of thousand of visitors to our region each year from all over the world. The tourists stay in our hotels and lodging establishments generating over \$80,000 annually in taxes that allow us to promote our region and specifically our central location to these NPS sites. NPS working with the U.S. Forest Service share a visitor’s center in our federally funded transit center and transfer point that serves over 18,000 visitors a year. 10,000 more are helped at the nearby Forks Visitor Center operated by the Forks Chamber of Commerce. The employment associated with our tourism sector was estimated to be one worker out of every ten in our community, with a significant portion of that being directly related to the attraction of the Olympic. The economic impacts to the Olympic Peninsula have been estimated to be as high as \$91m in total visitor spending and \$40m in personal income generated in that region. Yet, our monitoring, our involvement, and our community’s understanding of the significance of the Olympic was limited. While established in 1938 and added to over time, we took the Olympic’s existence, its operations, and its attractions for granted. That changed in January 2004.

We were told that the National Park Service’s adopted budget for FY 04 was such that in order for the Olympic to address core essential services they would have to make “service level adjustments^{iv}” that would require the Olympic to leave their partnership at the Transit Center in Forks. The Mayor and I began inquiring about this proposed cut, why it was needed, and how services were going to be provided for the thousands of visitors that would be coming to our community in the upcoming year looking for information and assistance at that location. The more we inquired, the more we realized that we needed to be vocal, engaged, and aware of the critical funding situation that the Olympic, actually all of the National Parks were facing.

As you know, the Forks Visitor Center issue was one of many NPS issues that caught the attention of the nation’s press corps. Our delegation reached across the aisle, and across the country, to join with other members of Congress to look at the funding levels of the NPS. In true bipartisanship, Representative Dicks worked with Interior Subcommittee Appropriations Chairman Rep. Taylor to find ways to prevent service cuts. They worked with Chairman Souder and his colleague Rep. Baird and their National Parks Caucus to ensure that the Congress continued to focus attention on the needs of the NPS. Chairman

Souder, Representative Dicks, Representative Baird -- our community has privately thanked you for those continual efforts, now we would like to do so publicly. It is because of that leadership that the Olympic received additional "Visitor Services Increase" in FY 05 that has allowed the management at Olympic to provide additional interpretative and visitor related offerings. Your leadership has been remarkable and has seen results. It is what every citizen can expect and be proud of in an elected official and we are extremely grateful for it. Thank you for that effort and that leadership.

Yet, there remains significant challenges before you and your colleagues in D.C. The challenges are associated with operational positions in law enforcement, interpretation and conservation/preservation that are going unfunded on the Olympic, Mt. Rainier, and at the Whitman Mission. This challenge is not limited to Washington State. No, it is also the case at places I visited with my daughter Anastasia this Summer in Ohio; and, it is also evident at the Civil War battlefields I visited last fall and this past spring. We need your continued leadership in this arena and your continued dedication in the months ahead as the demands on the national budget grow more and more.

In the Olympic, the FY 2001 budget included funding for 202 FTE. However, not all of those positions are filled -- even with the increases in the NPS operational budgets. FY 04's budget allocated 177 FTE and that led to our increased concerns. This affects the visitor's experience to the Olympic. There are not enough interpretative rangers to explain the microclimates associated with the Hoh Rainforest's Hall of Moss; or, the creatures in the tide pools along the Coast Strip; or, to talk about the unique characteristics of Lake Ozette and its sockeye salmon. There are similar impacts across the entire park and probably the NPS system. In addition, in the Olympic's West End District, the number of law enforcement employees remains lower now than five years ago. One former employee identified nine former full-time law enforcement positions within our district, but could only identify four people filling those positions at this time. We have hundreds of thousands of visitors; miles of trails, beaches, roads; dozens of campsites and our area's law enforcement is approximately one full time employee per every 50,000 visitors. We are fortunate, however, to have very safe parks due to the diligence of these employees and their part-time assistants.

There are also significant maintenance needs within the Olympic. We live in a harsh climate -- 11 feet of rain in Forks can be hard on roofs, pavement, equipment, and yes, at times on people! The Hoh Rainforest Visitor Center gets over 12 feet of rain a year -- and each year we face issues associated with trees falling down and blocking trails and/or roads, washouts of trails and roads, as well as wear on the buildings and infrastructure themselves. The wife of one park employee told me how happy her spouse was that he had for the first time in a few years some one to help him with his maintenance duties. Years ago, there were three full-time staff to address maintenance needs, and until this year, there was only her husband. One person cannot maintain the buildings, clean the toilets, patch the roads, fix the trailhead, mow grounds, etc. Our park is blessed with numerous visitors -- they are expecting specific things when they visit. When our amazing Park service staff cannot deliver that, it affects the visitor, their experience, and could spread the word that "the Olympic was nice, but ..."

A recent visit to the Hoh River Visitor Center gave me the opportunity to see such a situation. The interpretative program was to start in a few minutes. A large crowd of about 20+ people started to gather and continued to grow. This was a rather small group according to the staff -- they had taken larger ones on the tours earlier in the week. While that is an experience, and with this interpretative staffer it was probably an awesome presentation and opportunity, but imagine if there was more than one interpretative staffer at that location like there use to be? Small groups, more individual interactions, more learning opportunities -- that is the park experience many of us remember having while growing up and are expecting to share with our children.

Some would argue that these situations could be handled with volunteers or corporate sponsorships of additional staff. We have those in the Olympic. Volunteers are a godsend, true gold that deserve not only local recognition but national recognition for their service. But, they may not have the training in areas such as law enforcement and maintenance. While scheduled by park staff, they are volunteers with other things that might take over their lives – kids, work, medical issues and the like. When used for essential services, rather than to augment and expand opportunities, we are taking advantage of their being there. We also may not be utilizing their skills in the way that they had hoped to be used. Don't get me wrong, these folks are remarkable individuals.

Yet, I wonder if all parks treat all its volunteers the same. At Spotsylvania, a year or two ago, a friend of mine and I visited this once bloody battlefield. We pulled up to the Mission 66 era kiosk and noticed a guy reading a book sitting on the back of his "being restored" 1960s muscle car. He approached us and asked if we were visitors to the Park. We were a bit leery, and asked why do you ask that? He, somewhat dejected and a bit defensive, started to explain how in addition to being a full time emergency response employee in the local region, he is also a park volunteer and could fill us in on different things to see. No one had given him something to identify him as a park volunteer and you could tell our initial reaction didn't sit well with this remarkable servant. We had a great discussion with this volunteer and he told us of things to look for in the park when we went into the Mule Shoe and its battlements. He was a great volunteer and should not have been the subject of some suspicions by us.

This past Spring at Fredericksburg and the Chatham Mansion, I learned that the remarkable grounds of that Georgian mansion with its incredible gardens are maintained in large part thanks to volunteers – one of which was out mowing the acres of grass about that place. Inside, a volunteer greeted us – gave us a tour of the downstairs and answered our questions. Here was a local business man giving up his Saturday to help folks appreciate the unique history of that site. He was a wealth of knowledge and a true example of "Southern hospitality." Yet, I don't recall seeing anything indicating his role within the NPS. Each volunteer is a treasure – but every treasure needs to be properly cultivated, protected, and maintained.

Which raises additional issues for the Park's already strapped staff – how to undertake the recruitment of volunteers and how to provide for their training? In talking to one Park employee in the past year, I learned that they constantly have to think each fall about how to recruit the volunteers they will need for the next big tourist season. The work of recruiting volunteers is not easy, and in effect is similar to recruiting employees. In order to rely upon volunteers, Park Staff are learning that it requires a significant level of skill sets from those volunteers in order to reduce additional amount of time needed to train the volunteers. That or the park staff have to be able to have the time needed to fully train the volunteers they luckily find to serve in their part of the park. Even then, the volunteers may not have the skills or training to address such things as law enforcement issues, emergency medical response, maintenance of equipment, and a full understanding of the role of objective park interpretation. Volunteers are amazing additional resources, but they cannot supplant trained professional staff.

The idea of utilizing corporate or private sponsorships to provide for or fill former federally funded staff positions is something that is occurring on the Olympic. Local tourism generated sales taxes are used to provide for visitor information positions – the front line of the National Park Service. These are great opportunities for those individuals who are employed, however, these employees and the provided funds are being used to supplant, not augment, the Olympic's billeted FTE. In 2004, the Port Angeles Chamber of Commerce, local governments and businesses, worked together to provide the funds needed to plow the snow off the road leading up to the concessionaire at the Park's Hurricane Ridge. While this partnership was laudable, it was also a bit disturbing in that those scarce local dollars were in effect undertaking road maintenance that the NPS had for decades undertaken. Not all local communities may have the ability to absorb additional costs to keep the operations of the National Park in their community at the levels they have grown accustomed to being funded by the Service.

Another concern for our community is the state of some of the Olympic's infrastructure in our region. As noted above, the Olympic maintains in its inventory of facilities a host of campgrounds, trails, access points, ranger stations, and one visitor center in our Westend region. The latter, at the Hoh River Rainforest in West Jefferson County, is accessible by a two lane county road that serves about 100 residents, yet is used by some 100,000 automobiles each year. The road terminates within the Olympic at the Hoh River Visitor Center. This facility was built as part of the last great national expansion of NPS facilities referred to as Mission 66 that created 130 new visitor centers between 1956 and 1966.^v

The Hoh River Visitor Center is a facility that probably was designed for some 10-20,000 visitors during any given year in the late 1950s. When it was built and opened during the Kennedy Administration, it served the Park Service well with its small interpretative area and the modeled dioramas of elk herds and wildlife in the region. However, 40+ years later, the facility is showing the wear and tear associated with 260,000+ visitors that come to the Hoh rain forest each and every year^{vi}. It has been maintained by the heroic efforts of the Park Staff – but they are understaffed and are addressing only the most significant needs at this facility. Its septic system is outdated and over utilized, and its visitor center is extremely crowded if more than 20 people are there. Its interpretative displays are Mission 66 vintage, and are the same today as they were 10+ years ago when I first visited it. It's structural integrity is under continual assault by the weather and use of as high as 69,000+ visitors in August. In addition, if a program is scheduled and has to be moved indoors, there is no such location. It is also interesting that there is no movie facility for this visitor center that is common at other locations and used to set the visitor's location in a great context. At a local gathering amongst the residents of the Hoh River, it was discussed and there seemed to be a consensus that the facility needed to be improved and upgraded accordingly. I can say that we will be meeting within the community to determine whether or not to begin making the case for that position in the months ahead. It is a unique location and one that is truly enjoyed by thousands, but the number of visitors is obviously exceeding what it was built for 40+ years ago.

Of equal concern is the continual threat of the Hoh River to the road used by the public to access this visitor center. Repeatedly in the past eleven years that I have been in Forks, my government has been involved in various degrees in addressing the need to repair the road when it has been washed out by the river. If those repairs do not exceed a certain level, \$250,000 I believe, Jefferson County has to find those funds within its limited annual road budget. The past and present Jefferson County commissioners need to be commended for their dedication to ensuring the access for both their few inhabitants in that area and the hundreds of thousands of guests of the visitor center. While there are retail establishments on that road, I can also assure you that they do not generate \$250,000 a year in tax revenue for the County.

The Olympic has a list of additional maintenance needs beyond that which is needed to make it through one more season. They include trail repair, signage, camp ground repair or upgrades, etc., in the Hoh, Sol Duc, Lake Ozette and Lake Crescent areas. We have come to realize that the Olympic could a tipping point to where the maintenance needs overwhelm the already "maxed out" Park staff. If that unfortunate point is reached, both the visiting public and the tourism sector of our economy will suffer.

These specific concerns were the basis for the Forks City Council adopting a resolution in the Spring of this year supporting Chairman Souder's and Congressman Baird's National Park Centennial Act. My government believes that this is an innovative means of having those who care about parks, and who obtain a tax return each year, show their willingness to augment existing NPS funds to address non-road maintenance backlog issues and address operational needs. On the Olympic Peninsula, there is a collective concern about a noxious weed that is starting to invade our salmon-bearing rivers and streams – Japanese Knotweed. A bamboo-like plant, this tenacious plant is being found within the borders of the Olympic and could undermine the gravel spawning channels used by our many salmonids. The National Park Centennial Act, if adopted, would provide additional funds to the Olympic to help in their current

efforts to remove this threat from the Park. The proposed act would also help the Olympic with the preservation of its historical buildings and artifacts.

In this regard, the Olympic is not unique. I would guess that nearly every National Park has specific maintenance projects it has backlogged, as well as conservation and/or preservation projects that are triaged on a daily basis. I know that to be the case in Gettysburg, Saratoga, and other similar battlefield sites. Imagine the legacy that could be left to future generations if the maintenance backlog was reduced in a partnership between the citizenry donating their own tax returns and the Congress continuing its appropriation based funding for the Service. If it is enacted, you can be assured my family will check the box and place a portion of any meager return we receive into the effort to augment the NPS.

Our populations will grow, our public will continue to see the National Park Service as its place to learn, relax, experience and recreate at those sites that have made this country what is today. The National Park Centennial Act may just be the vehicle to ensure the Service's ability to meet future demand and expectations. Mr. Chairman, Rep. Baird, Rep. Reichert and Rep. Inslee, we are grateful for your efforts to push forward this important legislation and hope to see its enactment into law in the not too distant future. I submit with this testimony a copy of the joint letter to you, Mr. Chairman, by over 20 chambers of commerce of the Northwest. Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, these business leaders know the value of NPS within this state. Their voice of support for the Act, as well as your and your colleagues' leadership for NPS funding, is a significant endorsement of the importance of these issues to our state.

Our community will remain proactive and engaged in these issues. We have already spent, and will continue to spend, for us what are significant sums on marketing to the world our region and its access to the Olympic. We have begun meeting with our communities and chambers of commerce directly impacted by the Olympic's presence and attraction. Working together, we hope to increase our voice about these issues. In what was the first, of what I hope will be a reoccurring twice-a-year event, the Olympic's remarkable superintendent Bill Laitner presented his approach to this current tourism season in the Olympic. This first time event, and with the help of the National Parks Conservation Association, was very educational and informative dialog. From such activities we can begin to further understand and support the needs of the jewel in our backyard, and no longer take it or its attraction for millions of visitors to the Olympic Peninsula for granted.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I appreciate the time you took to travel to this distant location when there are significant national and world issues that are pressing in the Nation's Capital. It has truly been an honor and a privilege. In addition to my testimony, on behalf of my community, a friend helped make the small token of appreciation I am leaving with each of you and your staff. Hopefully, the two pins will inspire you to someday make the journey to Forks and the nearby Hoh Rainforest. It's an awesome place to live and raise a family. Thank you again for your concern and leadership on these issues, that too is greatly appreciated by our rural community and by the men and women working in the tourism sector on the Olympic Peninsula.

END NOTES

ⁱ Rod is the City Attorney, Prosecutor and Planner for a rural community of 3,200 people located on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. His duties range from annexation review, to criminal prosecution, to labor relations, to natural resource policy review, to zoning code interpretations. After serving in the United States Air Force Rod received his BA in history from the University of Washington. While living in Seattle, Rod became very active in local politics. Rod received his J.D. from Seattle University School of Law, graduated in 1994 and was hired by the City of Forks shortly thereafter. In 1985, he married his high school sweetheart, Cheri Tinker, and they have been married for 19 years. They have three children and the family lives in Forks. He is, when time permits, a lecturer on German Genealogy; an officer in the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War; and, active in his community.

ⁱⁱ I will put in what will undoubtedly be the longest footnote in this hearing, or maybe any hearing, some of the highlights of "a corner to corner" journey across this remarkable state.

It takes about twelve hours to travel from Forks to Clarkston, Washington. Making that trip, a person can appreciate this State's vast expanses, unique landscapes, and remarkable history. One begins the journey on the rain-kissed Forks prairie – named for being at the "forks" of two remarkably intact rivers and past Lake Crescent's ten miles of tree lined shores. From there it's over the Elwha River where one of the largest salmon recovery projects is underway with the congressionally funded removal of the Elwha River dams and into the City of Port Angeles. Here one can visit Hurricane Ridge, shop in its cozy downtown, or catch a ferry to Victoria, British Columbia across the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Port Angeles is the headquarters of the Olympic National Park and from here Superintendent Bill Laitner manages some 933,000+ acres of beaches, trees, lakes, streams, rivers, hills, mountains, and all the services associated with a Crown Jewel of the National Park Service.

Leaving Port Angeles, you come into Sequim (pronounced Sqwim) which is the "rain shadow" of the Olympics getting only a foot of rain a year and which is ideally situated for the growing of lavender. From Sequim, one has to cross the Hood Canal and in doing so one crosses one of a couple engineering marvels in our state – floating bridges and specifically the Hood Canal Bridge. The Hood Canal Bridge is a floating mass of concrete pontoons and roadways that still amazes me with each trip across it. As you leave the Bridge, you pass Port Gamble – a National Historic Site which was one of the early settlements in Washington, burial site of the state's first military casualty, and still a "company town" owned by Pope Resource. From there you would make your way into the ferry port at Kingston where one can take a 45 minute trip across the Puget Sound – one of the prettiest and active waterways in the Nation – into Edmonds voted one of the friendliest towns in our State and part of Congressman Inslee's 1st Congressional District. From Edmonds you head down Interstate 5, and if the skies are clear, you have the opportunity to view the majestic peak of Mt. Rainer hovering in the distance.

On your way into Seattle, you will notice that you pass the well known University of Washington – not only my alma matter but also that of Congressmen Dicks, Inslee, Smith and Congresswoman McMorris – they obviously did much better than I in college and thereafter. But, the "UW" is also known for its innovations and discoveries in the fields of medicine, forestry, marine biology, foreign language, and technology. Coming into one of the prettiest cities in the West, you are greeted with views of what Congressman McDermott calls home – Mt. Rainer, Lake Union, the Space Needle, and the Seattle waterfront. From the waterfront, adventurers headed north to Alaska as part of the 1897-98 Klondike Gold Rush – with as much wild enthusiasm in their hearts as the beat to Elvis Presley's song of the same name who visited the Space Needle and made a movie about the World's Fair held in the early 1960s. The National Park Service maintains the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park within a historic landmark building where one can learn about the expectations, risks, triumphs and tragedies associated with the Alaskan Gold Rush. A traveler can find some great things to do in Seattle – visit the world famous fish mongers in Pike Place Market and watch "flying salmon," get a glimpse of "hammering man" at work paying tribute to the working men and women of this traditionally blue collar region at the Seattle Art Museum; or, get some famous Ezell's fried chicken to go with you as you continue on your trip. You are also in King County – the former "beat" of former King County Sheriff now Congressman Reichert – and it's the home to one of the largest corporations in the world – Bill Gate's Microsoft® – whose programs were used to put this testimony together and represents the technology sector that is part of the entire State's economy. While the "boom" in tech stocks and companies "busted" in the late 1990s and chilled

our region in the first half of this decade, already we are seeing a rising growth in this sector of our region's economy.

If your schedule permitted, you could also go into Tacoma, which is a part of Congressman Dicks' 6th Congressional District, to see world renowned glass sculptures by Dale Chihuly lining the bridgeway to the Tacoma Glass Museum; visit the University of Washington's Tacoma campus; and, learn why Tacoma is "the Wired City" in both technology and international trade circles. Tacoma is a vibrant City undergoing a significant renaissance and expansion.

Your trip eastward could allow you to run over to Mt. Rainer from Tacoma and visit its Alpine meadows, gaze at its snow capped glaciers, and see why this mountain is known as a part of "Paradise" by so many people around the world. The Mt. Rainer National Park staff would also be willing to tell you about the geology of this active volcano – Big Sister to Mt. St. Helens to the south – and give you directions on how to eventually find your way to Yakima through the Cascade Mountains via White Pass. Early exploration of this area was undertaken by the federal explorers lead by Isaac Stevens, who went from surveying to becoming the first Territorial Governor of this State, only to die rather young at the Battle of Chantilly in the Civil War.

From the mountain meadows, you come into the "fruit belt" of the Yakima Valley and begin crossing through the southern portion of Congresswoman McMorris' 5th Congressional District. Here apples, hops, and cherries have been grown for decades made possible using the waters of the Columbia and Yakima Rivers. Today, one of the growing crops is grapes and Washington's southeastern corner is home to dozens of wineries and thousands of acres of world renowned grape vineyards. As you head eastward, you are not far from the Hanford Nuclear Reservation and the Hanford Reach National Monument. Here are lands that once made the "Fat Man" nuclear bomb deployed at Nagasaki over 60 years ago that ended World War II and ushered in the Atomic Age, but are now in the process of intense clean up and decontamination. Yet, are also being conserved and restored as a wildlife area for the enjoyment of future generations.

Your trip would take you through Kennewick, past the site of where the Kennewick Man was found along the mighty Columbia River and into Pasco. From Pasco and Kennewick, wheat and other crops are off loaded from rail cars into large barges for the trip down the river and to such places as Japan, China, and India. Pasco, home to Congressman Hastings and part of his 4th Congressional District, is part of a growing region referred to as "the Tri-Cities." My wife, Cheri, grew up here, we attended school here and our families still live here and so this part of the journey is "common" for the Fleck household when go to visit our little one's grandparents.

Leaving Pasco and heading to Walla Walla, you are now following the path of Lewis and Clark who nearly two hundred years ago made their historic journey through this same region. Where they saw prairie grasses, sage brush, and rolling hills, you now see wheat fields, wind mills generating power, and yes sage brush – lots of sage brush.

Just outside of Walla Walla – known for its remarkable sweet onions – you can visit NPS' Whitman Mission Historic Site. Here Marcus and Narcissa Whitman undertook their missionary work while trying to carve out a settlement in what was then disputed Oregon Territory. A poignant part of the Whitman story includes the loss of their two year old daughter, Alice, who drowned in the river along the mission site where she was born. In 1847, as a measles epidemic broke out amongst the mission and the neighboring Tribe of Cayuse originating in one of the wagon trains of settlers to the region, tensions rose to the boiling point as nearly half of the Cayuse tribe died from the measles. It was this tragedy that lead to the massacre also commemorated at this small, solemn, windswept site.

Passing through Walla Walla, one sees the mix of history and modern development. Here veterans receiving treatments at the VA's medical facility mingle with tourists exploring Walla Walla's wine country. Students attending Whitman College mingle with farm laborers working in the agricultural industry. Windmills and fields of wheat, asparagus and other vegetables blanket the landscape as you continue to head north/northeast around the Umatilla National Forest and its Ponderosa Pine covered Blue Mountains. Eventually, you come into Clarkston, located across the Snake River from Lewiston, Idaho. Obviously, these twin cities were named for the two explorers that with the Corps of Discovery floated on this same spot nearly two centuries ago.

If you made all of the stops on this trip, obviously, it would have taken you more than 10-12 hours to drive the 480 miles that make up this snapshot of Washington. But, if you did make the trip – truly it would illustrate the vastness of the West, the beauty that is Washington, and the richness that imbues every

community and town along the way. While biased, I truly can say it is one of the most uniquely beautiful places on earth.

- iii Olympic National Park consists of more than 922,000 acres of which 95% was declared wilderness during President Reagan's second term. Within its borders are the headwaters, and estuaries, of the rivers associated with the Westend. In FY 2004, NPS reported 3,074,147 visitors to Olympic. Olympic's budget was as follows: FY 2001 enacted \$10.09m with 197 FTE; FY 2002 saw an increase resulting in 202 FTE; FY 2004 enacted \$10.13m with 177 FTE.
- iv As reported in the media in March of 2004, this phrase was coined within NPS HQ to characterize these cuts. See Joel Connelly *In the Northwest: Bush seems intent on clearcutting park funding*, Seattle Post Intelligencer, 19 March 2004.
- v Mission 66 was initiated in the Eisenhower Administration by then NPS Director Conrad Wirth. According to Director Wirth, the objective of the Mission 66 program was "to overcome the inroads of neglect and to restore to the American people a National Park System adequate for their needs." Wirth believed that there would be an increase in the travel to and visiting of the nation's National Parks and felt that efforts should be made to plan and provide for such growth. His plan was ambitious, and not without its detractors and controversy. However, during the ten years of the program NPS saw its visitors rates more than double from 60 million visitors to over 130 million. See <http://www.rpts.tamu.edu/pugsley/Wirth%20Conrad.htm>, biography of Conrad Wirth.
- vi Visitor counts and federal budget numbers were found in the National Park Service's ***Green Book*** which is their proposed budget and explanation to the federal budget writers. Most of the numbers came from the FY 2006 Budget Justifications portion of the Green Book found at: <http://data2.itc.nps.gov/budget2/fy06gbk.htm> Some of the specific Hoh Visitor Center information was obtained from a request made of the Olympic's Park Superintendent's Office. They informed me that the Hoh Visitor Center received 261,666 visitors in FY 2004. The visitation to the center fluctuated from a low of about 400 visitors in December to a high of nearly 70,000 in August. One side comment, the NPS could make data associated with its operations and maintenance activities easier for the general public to access and become familiar with if they are so interested. NPS has a remarkable website for its park visitors, but it is extremely difficult for individuals interested in how any specific park operates to find detailed FTE data, site specific visitor service information, etc.